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HOME MISSION LESSON

ISSUED BY THE

WOMEN'S BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETY.

PREPARED BY

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LESSON VII.—MORMONISM.—THE REMEDY.

In the previous lesson our attention was directed to the origin, nature, and development of the disease which is the plague of Utah; in this lesson we shall consider the remedy—the medicine which alone can kill the cancer that has struck its roots deeply in Utah, is fast extending them not only into adjacent Territories, but to all parts of our land, and is eating into the very vitals of our national life, social, political, and religious; a remedy which can “save Utah to civilization, and make her as beautiful in all her moral garnitures as the waters of her wonderful lakes, and the glow of her opal mountains in the crystal clearing of her skies; a remedy found alone in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is the supreme need of every spot on earth where sin abounds, and especially of Utah, where is the very seat of Satan.”

1. Into what four classes, as subjects of religious interest, may the Mormons be divided?

We find this question thus answered in the *Home Mission Monthly*: “As the Jews were divided into four religious sects, so are these strange imitators of Jewish customs and habits. *First*, there is the genuine fanatic, who has embraced and held all the absurdities and iniquities of the Mormon system until they have burned out of him the spirit of worship, confidence in God, and manly honor. He is now prepared for immorality, idolatry, and high treason against the government. These seem almost beyond the reach of gospel influence and given over to a strong delusion. *Second*, another class try to believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet, that the book of Mormon and the book of Doctrines and covenants were inspired of God. They are evidently conscientious and sincere, feeling in the dark after God, and would embrace the truth if they could understand it. The *third* class have no confidence in Mormonism whatever, believe it to be a lie and a fraud, have suffered the loss of nearly all things, and yet, for fear of social ostracism and losing patronage in business, continue their relation to the Mormon hierarchy. *Fourth*, there is still another class, who have the courage of their convictions and are drawing away from Mormon rule and influence. This class represents at present a large number, especially of the young people, and unless given at once a pure gospel, they will soon become spiritualists, hopeless infidels, and atheists.”

2. To what extent are new converts to Mormonism corrupted by its doctrines?

New converts, as a rule, know but little of Mormonism. As has been stated in the previous lesson, its missionaries, in making proselytes, present only the most credible features of their belief, and this in the most plausible and seductive manner.

3. How may they, as the doctrines of Mormonism are made known to them, be led to discern their error, and to embrace truth?

“Our chief weapon in combating this error must be what the Church's weapon has always been, the gospel of the Son of God. With this she has won her great victories in the past, and wielding this the future will record still grander triumphs. Wherever there is a Mormon tabernacle,” continues the same writer, “there we must build a church and there send a missionary. *We must not leave darkness alone. Evil never cures itself.* Into every Mormon settlement, into every benighted valley, let the light be borne.

“The rotunda and dome of the national capitol are lighted by hundreds of gas jets. I went in it in the evening, and all was darkness. There were works of art there, but they could not be seen. Then the electrician touched a little key, and instantly the whole place was flooded with light. The darkness fled away, and the grand architecture and beautiful paintings were revealed. So it will be in all these settlements. There is beauty there, but the darkness hides it. Women are there who, in order that they may rise to the noble plane where duty is the rule of life, under iniquitous delusion have crucified their womanly instincts and submitted to the most degrading slavery, and guileless men are there who have been duped by cunning priests; these will be revealed when the advancing light of the gospel shall have driven the darkness away.”

4. In what spirit should these deluded people be approached? What is the testimony of missionaries on this point?

Says Rev. Richard Hartly, writing of his ministry in Ogden: “We have pursued a *peace policy*, refraining from any mention of Mormonism from the pulpit, trusting in the simple presentation of the gospel to both pull down the false and build up the true. Any other course serves only to awaken hostility and effectually destroy any influence for good.” Another, who is held in profound respect by both Mormons and Gentiles, be-

lieves in candidly, but in kindly spirit, pointing out the errors and delusions of the system in which many are ignorantly trusting, warning them of their danger and telling them how they may be saved. All find a vantage ground in emphasizing what the Mormons call their "first principles," viz.: Repentance, faith, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

5. What is the secret power of this system?

Belief in the divine inspiration, and hence infallibility, of the priesthood, is the secret power of the system, and a veritable Pandora's box, out of which may spring any possible delusion or excess. Said Heber C. Kimball, formerly one of the apostles: "The word of our Leader and Prophet is the word of God to this people. We cannot see God. We cannot hold converse with Him. But He has given us a man that we can talk to, and thereby know His will, just as well as if God Himself were present with us." Special "revelations" to the head of the church, even if directly contrary to the Scriptures, or the Book of Mormon, are absolutely binding. The latter says: "Wherefore I, the Lord God, will not suffer that this people do like unto them of old; wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord. For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none." Yet a "special" revelation sufficed to establish polygamy. Mormon despotism, then, has its roots in the superstition of the people; and this Congress cannot legislate away.

6. Why is the cure for Mormonism found in the Gospel rather than in the law?

Leonora Page, who sacrificed her life in gospel work among the Mormons, wrote in 1888:

"You ask me if the Gospel is the only remedy for the errors of Mormonism. I answer 'yes' and 'no.' 'The gospel is indeed the power of God unto Salvation,' to the Mormon as to any other sinner. The strong arm of the law is also a powerful persuader."

"Law-makers can treat the symptoms, but not the disease. The axe must be laid at the root of the tree. The moral atmosphere must be purified, and Christianity alone can do this. The peculiar nature of the evil hampers the arm of the law; the sword can scarcely be drawn without injustice being done, but truth can touch the evil anywhere and everywhere, and yet violate no principle of right. The Mormon fears the Christian church more than he does the government, and those who know best the power of the Gospel and the weaknesses of Mormonism believe that the overthrow of the latter will be a conquest of peace."

Says Mrs. Paddock: "I knew a girl, intelligent, thoughtful, and anxious to learn all that she could from books—who was equally unable to tell me what the principles of Mormonism were, or what she had been taught, aside from the doctrine of polygamy, except on one point, and on this she was very

clear. She learned that the Gentiles were the enemies of the Saints, and that she ought to pray for their destruction. Sitting in our room one night, and listening to my husband as he read, 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you,' she asked, 'Is that in the Bible?'"

"Certainly," I replied. 'Here is the book. You can see for yourself.'

"Well," she said, 'I never knew that before. I always thought that we should hate our enemies, and pray that swift destruction might overtake them. I have listened to such prayers ever since I can remember.'

"On another occasion, when one of us read from John's Gospel the touching story of the days that preceded our Lord's crucifixion, she said: 'I have heard more of Christ to-night than in all my life before.'"

7. What was the fate of the first man who attempted to gather children into a Sunday school in Salt Lake City?

The first man who attempted to gather the children of Salt Lake City into a Sunday school was brutally murdered within a few yards of the building in which he taught the little ones.

8. What denomination was the first to establish itself permanently in Utah, and in what order have others followed?

"The Episcopalians began Gospel and educational work in Utah Territory in 1870, and were followed at short intervals by the Methodists, the Presbyterians, and the Congregationalists. The Congregationalists may be said to have been the first on the ground, but after their meetings had been broken up and the superintendent of their Sunday school murdered, in 1866, the mission was virtually abandoned for some years; but in 1874 they reopened their doors, and took up the work again in the same building into which Dr. Robinson's dead body had been carried eight years before."

9. When did the Baptists enter the territory, and at what points have they established churches?

"In 1872 a Baptist Church was organized, but in the course of two or three years some of the members died, and others removed from the Territory, until but two were left, and the little Baptist Church became a thing of the past."

In 1881 the Baptists again began work at one point only, in a territory already largely occupied by the other denominations, and a church was organized in Ogden with eleven members. Two and a half years later a Baptist interest was started in the city of Salt Lake, with sixteen members; February 27, 1891, a Baptist Church was organized at Provo, with seventeen members, and May 21, 1899, one at Springville with eight members.

10. State some facts connected with the history of these churches.

Ogden, where the Baptists resumed their work, is unlike most Mormon towns. Situated at the junction of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific roads, and being also the Utah terminus of the Denver and Rio Grande and the Utah Northern, the people of Ogden

are brought in contact with the outer world to a greater extent than those of any other part of the Territory. The little church, organized in July, 1881, has grown in spiritual power as it has in numbers. The membership of this church, September, 1902, was 227. Three Sunday schools are reported, with an enrollment of 260, and an average attendance of 135. Rev. O. C. Wright is the pastor of the church.

In Salt Lake City, in the beginning, the Baptists secured a room over a blacksmith shop, instituted regular services, and gathered the children of the surrounding neighborhood into a Sabbath school.

The congregation increased steadily, though not very rapidly at first; but the Sabbath school grew in numbers until the room began to be too small for it. One noticeable feature of this school was the large proportion of children who came to it from apostate and Mormon families. In the summer of 1883 a church of sixteen members was organized, and the following September the work of the church and Sabbath school was supplemented by a day school. In the meantime the foundation of a house of worship had been laid in the western part of the city, and early in the winter the building was completed and dedicated.

The membership of this First Baptist Church in Salt Lake City by September, 1902, had grown to 229, while the Sunday schools enrolled about 256 members. Rev. D. A. Brown is pastor of the church.

October 7, 1892, the East Side Baptist Church was organized with fifteen members, and by March, 1893, counted fifty on its roll.

A chapel for the house of this second church was dedicated November 13, 1892. Rev. S. G. Adams became pastor of this church at the time of its organization, and continued to serve in this capacity until October 1, 1895, when he entered fully upon the duties of General Missionary in Utah. Rev. Frank Barnett is the present pastor. The membership of this church as reported in September, 1902, was 154, and the total enrollment in the Sunday school, 202.

The Provo Baptist Church was organized February 27, 1891, and its chapel dedicated in February, 1893, at which time the church reported twenty-seven members, and a Sunday school enrollment of about forty. The membership of the church in 1902 was forty-nine, and the Sunday school enrollment 93.

The church at Springville is the outgrowth of a mission started there in April, 1894, and in September, 1902, reported a membership of fifteen. Rev. C. W. Nichols cares for this field, also Thistle and Helper.

A church with eight members is reported at Bear River, with a Union Sunday school enrolling 53 members.

Besides the Baptist churches already named, there are in Salt Lake City two others. A Swedish Baptist Church enrolling 19 members, and a colored church, organized June 20, 1893, with a present membership of 27.

The aggregate membership of the Baptist

churches in Utah, as reported in 1902, is thus seen to be 750, and the Sunday school enrollment, 955.

11. What can you say of the susceptibility of Mormons to Baptist doctrine and practice?

Said a missionary of another denomination: "We can get the Mormons into our schools; we can get them to abandon their former religion, but we cannot get them to accept our baptism or unite with our churches." "The Mormons are, from their cradles, persistently taught that their church is modeled exactly upon that founded by the apostles. They insist upon repentance, faith, and baptism, and when once they give up the absurd and disgusting parts of their system, they will naturally turn to the church that observes the ordinances as they were originally given." Said D. L. Moody, at the close of his meetings in Salt Lake City: "The Baptists are the only people that can do anything with the Mormons."

THE WOMEN'S BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETY IN UTAH.

Miss Rhoda A. Denman was the first missionary of the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society in Utah. She labored at Terrace, one hundred and twenty-four miles west of Ogden, from March, 1882, until July, 1884. In August, 1883, Miss Mary Watson was sent to Ogden, and in January, 1884, transferred to Salt Lake City, where she remained until the following June.

In November, 1884, Miss Anna B. Nilsson and Miss Caroline Larson, Swedes, began work in Salt Lake City, with the hope of helping many women from the Scandinavian countries.

In October, 1885, Miss Emma F. Parsons was sent to Ogden, where she was joined by Miss Larson, transferred from Salt Lake City. At this time, in response to an importunate appeal from Dr. De Witt, Miss Emma L. Miller, and Miss Leonora Page (Americans), Miss Anna Nelson (Swede), and Miss Mary Cliver (Dane), were sent to Salt Lake City, where Miss Nilsson continued to labor. In December, Miss Mary Cliver resigned, and in February Miss Nilsson was called home by the illness of her mother; the following May, Miss Miller was summoned to Chicago to become associate preceptress at the Training School, and in January, 1887, Miss Nelson's impaired health compelled her to leave Utah.

This left Miss Page alone until June, 1888, when, greatly exhausted, she came to her home, it was hoped for rest and recuperation, but her work was done, and after a lingering illness, she entered Heaven, April 2, 1889.

In September, 1886, Miss Larson became the wife of Augustus Olander, and in October, Miss Anna Oberg succeeded her in Ogden. Miss Parson's health failing, she left the field during the spring of 1887. Miss Oberg remained in Ogden until October, 1891, when she was transferred to Pocatello. She was married to Mr. Zack Sleeth, August 3, 1892.

When Miss Parsons was able to resume her work, she was sent to Provo, reaching the field February 17, 1891. In April, 1894, arrangements were made by which she was able to give about one-half of her time to work in Springville, six miles south of Provo, Mrs. J. C. Andrews being employed to take a part of her work in Provo. This arrangement continued until June 1, 1896, when Miss Parsons left the field for one month's vacation, but was prostrated by an illness from which she did not recover sufficiently to return until October, 1898. In the fall of 1896, Mrs. Andrews resigned, that she might take charge of the day school under the auspices of the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society. Miss Rose Glen Webster was sent to Provo, November 1, 1895, and remained until August, 1897, when she was detailed for service in Indiana and neighboring States. Miss Frieda Dressel, her successor, reached Provo November 4, 1897.

Miss Lilian Plimpton and Miss Lilian Blair were sent to Springville November 1, 1896, to continue the work so well begun by Miss Parsons.

The work in *Salt Lake City*, interrupted by the sickness and death of Miss Page, was resumed November 5, 1893, Miss Rose J. Clarke being commissioned to work with the First, and Miss Mina B. Morford with the East Side Baptist Church. In November, 1894, Miss Eyles was placed in charge of the Gospel Kindergarten in the First Church.

In August, 1895, Miss Clarke and Miss Morford were detailed for service, the former in Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio, and the latter in Iowa and Minnesota. November 1, 1895, Miss Bertha Moore was sent to take Miss Clarke's place, and Miss Lilian Plimpton, Miss Morford's in Salt Lake City. When Miss Morford returned in November, 1896, Miss Plimpton was transferred to Springville. Miss Clarke did not return to Utah, but became a general missionary in Colorado, March 1, 1896.

In consequence of impaired health, Miss Eyles left Utah in August, 1897, and the care of the kindergarten was assumed by the church.

Miss Morford's health was so affected by the altitude, that a change was necessary, and Miss Emma Parsons, with returning health, became her successor on the East Side in Salt Lake City.

In 1899 Miss Webster returned to Utah, being located at Ogden, where she served, with an interim for rest, until October, 1901, when she was transferred to Murray, succeeding Miss Pauline Extrom, who had been

appointed for this field, but was obliged to resign after a short term of service. In March, 1902, Miss Webster's health became impaired, and she was obliged to seek a change of climate.

The work at Springville grew, and in November, 1900, work was begun at Thistle. In November, 1901, Miss Blair became the wife of Mr. Ebenezer Caldwell, of Alton, Ill., Miss Mary Roe being appointed as her successor. Illness in her family compelled Miss Roe to leave Utah in May, 1902, and in August, Miss Plimpton was transferred to Murray.

It was then deemed best to transfer Miss Dressel from Provo to carry on the work at Springville and Thistle, and Miss R. Maude Ditmars was appointed as her associate.

Miss Clara Mayhew was commissioned to care for the work at Provo, reaching her field in July, 1902; in November, a somewhat protracted illness left her so broken in health that she returned to her home in California.

What testimony is given to the value of the work of these women missionaries among the Mormons?

We refer to a letter written by Dr. De Witt, in which, after testing the value of such help as had been given by missionaries of the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society, he says: "I cannot express my gratitude to my Divine Master, and His dear handmaidens in Chicago, for deciding to send to this needy field such laborers. I turn toward Chicago with gratitude for the past and hope for the future." Not less cheering is the witness borne by another missionary, long a resident of Utah, who writes: "Will you allow me to express, on behalf of myself and family, and a large number of others, our gratitude that the Lord has put it into your hearts to send us such noble ladies. Many a soul by their wise counsel has been strengthened in its struggle to pull loose from the bondage of error and superstition; many a heart has been made glad to whose comfort they have generously ministered, and there are those who say that next to God, they owe their spiritual attitude to these ladies, who are doing a work that a man cannot do. Many homes are open to them which are closed to him. And many homes are now open to me as a Gospel minister which never would have been but for the preparatory work of these sisters. The *Women's Baptist Home Mission Society* has certainly not mistaken its duty in including Utah in its care. Remember that the power of Christianity through a wise presentation of the pure Gospel is the antidote for Mormonism."

